



*Office of the United States Attorney  
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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For Information Contact Public Affairs  
SANDY RAYNOR  
Telephone: (602) 514-7625  
Cell: (602) 525-2681

## **MEXICAN CITIZEN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR THROWING ROCKS AT BORDER PATROL HELICOPTER**

TUCSON, Ariz. – Antonio Eretza-Flores, 33, an illegal alien from Mexico, was sentenced here yesterday by U.S. District Judge Raner C. Collins to 38 months in prison to be followed by 36 months of supervised release.

Eretza-Flores pleaded guilty to Aggravated Assault on a Federal Agent and Illegal Re-Entry After Deportation based upon a July 2004 incident during which he threw rocks at a U.S. Border Patrol helicopter, forcing it to make an emergency evasive maneuver. One of the rocks traveled between the main rotor blades, narrowly missing the plexiglass door of the aircraft.

On July 23, 2004, Eretza-Flores was a passenger in a stolen vehicle which contained numerous illegal aliens. The vehicle fled from a Huachuca City Police officer after the officer attempted to conduct a traffic stop. The officer was eventually forced off the road and into a ditch.

Agents from U.S. Border Patrol responded to assist in the pursuit utilizing ground units, a Border Patrol Helicopter and an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). When the stolen vehicle became disabled, Eretza-Flores fled on foot leading agents on a three mile foot pursuit through a remote area. As a Border Patrol helicopter attempted to guide ground agents towards the defendant with its searchlight, Eretza-Flores threw a total of four rocks at the helicopter.

Eretza-Flores entered the guilty pleas on December 1, 2005 without a plea agreement. The sentences imposed for each count were ordered to run concurrently.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Border Patrol, Huachuca City Police Department, the FBI and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The prosecution was handled by Brad Giles and Jonathan Granoff, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-04-1692-TUC-RCC (BPV)  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2006-050(Eretza-Flores)

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